

Contributions.

THE PASSOVER AND THE FEAST OF UN-LEAVENED BREAD.

ISAAC LEEDY.

The Passover was first observed on Wednesday, April 18, B. C. 1611. The last Passover during our Lord's ministry, fell on Thursday, April 6, A. D. 30. Note the surrounding events, and points of similarity of these feasts. Both were observed on the 14th day of the first sacred month which embraced a part of March and part of April, (Heathen time.) The original institution of the Passover in Egypt preceded the establishment of the priesthood and the regulation of the service of the tabernacle, it necessarily fell short in several particulars of the observance of the festival according to the fully developed ceremonial law. The head of the family slew the lamb in his own house, not in the holy place; the blood was sprinkled upon the lintel, or head posts, and upon the two side posts of the doors of their houses, to save them from the destroyer, who, seeing this token, would *pass over* their houses without entering to smite the first born. When these instructions were delivered, "the people bowed the head and worshipped. And the children of Israel went away and did as Jehovah commanded," and waited in their houses for that last "plague upon Pharaoh, and upon Egypt which was to bring about the deliverance of God's people. The tremendous hour was not long delayed. While the Jews were celebrating this first Passover on the night of the 14th at midnight the destroying angel went forth in a pestilence, and smote all the first born in the land of Egypt, "from the first born of Egypt that sat on the throne, unto the first born of the captive that was in the dungeon; and all the first born of cattle."

The effects of this dreadful blow was exactly such as Moses had foretold. (Ex. 11:1.) The king, his nobles, and the Egyptian people, rose in sorrow from their beds that night. The shrieks of the living, with the groans of those about to die breaking in upon the stillness of the night—the darkness of which must greatly have aggravated the horror and confusion of that hour—made the people fancy they were all *doomed to destruction*, and that the work of death would not cease till they had all perished. It appeared to them that the only method of arresting the progress of the destruction was to send the Hebrews instantly away in the fear that every moment they tarried would prove the loss of a thousand lives to Egypt.

Pharaoh "called for Moses and Aaron by night, and said, Rise up, and get you forth from among my people, both you and the children of Israel, and go, serve the Lord, as ye have said.

Also take your flocks and your herds, as ye have said, and be gone; and bless me also.

The feast of unleavened bread was not observed in connection with the first Passover for this reason, on the "morrow after the Passover," which was the 15th of the first month, (Num. 33:3,) the Hebrews left Egypt. Christ did not keep the feast of unleavened bread because he departed out of this world on the same day he kept the Passover with his Apostles.

The Passover in Egypt occurred about fifty days before that eventful day when God descended in fire upon the mountain, which quaked beneath his feet. No figure or similitude appeared but a voice was heard from amidst the thick clouds, giving utterance to the words that from the decalogue, Christ's last Passover occurred fifty days before the day of Pentecost when God again descended from heaven in fire to pour forth that Holy Spirit which gives the spiritual discernments of his law.

Just as the appearance of God on Sinai was the birthday of the Jewish nation, so was that Pentecost a spiritual birthday of the Christian church. More than fifteen hundred centuries intervened between the Passover in Egypt and the Christian Passover. Eight of these feasts are of chief historical importance, thus furnishing unmistakable evidence with reference to the legal time of keeping this feast, as well as the design thereof. We will call up all the witnesses along this line and examine their testimony carefully and impartially. By reference to (Ex. 12:6) we learn that God commanded the Hebrews to keep up the lamb until the 14th of the first month which was well understood to mean the beginning of the 14th and not the end, as some try to construe it. "And they killed it on the 14th day of the month," (II Chron. 30:15; 35:1,) "at even at the going down of the sun," "at the season that thou comest forth out of Egypt," (Deut. 16:6,) or as the Hebrew and German rendering, "between the two evenings." Marginal reading, (Ex. 12:6) The Jews had two evenings, the first commenced where the second ended, in this instance the second evening of the 13th ended at sunset, and the first evening of the 14th also begun at sunset, the 13th, and sometimes included the whole night. Thus, 'the evening,' which is understood to mean night, 'and the morn-

ing' or day, constituted the first, second and third days. Inasmuch as the expressions, "going down of the sun between the two evenings," are construed to mean three o'clock P. M., of the 14th by all the anti-passover writers, we will call another witness on the stand whose testimony is so conclusive and pointed that it is impossible to explain it away. Yea, it is impossible to harmonize this witness with the mistaken idea that the 15th of Nisan was the legal time to keep the Passover. We go down the stream of time one year from the time this feast was instituted. (Num. 9.) Here we find where the Lord (not fallible man) spake unto Moses in the wilderness of Sinai, in the first month of the second year after they were come out of the land of Egypt saying, Let the children of Israel also keep the Passover at his appointed season.

God knew how much his people were inclined to "forsake the fountain of living waters, and hew out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Brother Bowman says, "The Old Testament, the New Testament and Josephus testify that the lamb was killed in the afternoon of the fourteenth, and was eaten on the fifteenth.

"I maintain that the afternoon of the fourteenth was the *only* time that the Paschal lamb could have been lawfully sacrificed; every scripture can be harmonized with this view." Brother Bowman you are the man I have been looking for, for a quarter of a century. I have made a standing offer of one thousand dollars to any person that will find one text either in the Old or New Testament containing either precept or example for keeping the Passover on the fifteenth of Nisan.

Hearken to the Lord speaking to Moses and designating the appointed season. *In the fourteenth day of this month, between the two evenings, ye shall keep it* (the Passover) *in his appointed season*; according to all the rites of it, and according to all the ceremonies thereof, shall ye keep it. And they kept the Passover on the fourteenth day of the first month at even in the wilderness of Sinai: according to all that the Lord commanded Moses. Num. 9:5, 6.

We read the above texts to a class of bright little scholars in our Sunday-school who never had been instructed on this question; then said, Children on what day of the month did they keep the Passover? *On the fourteenth*, was the response of nearly all the children.

We would have to study all the dead languages, before we could make people believe that the above texts prove that God meant to teach his people to keep the